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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [EUN](#) [SY](#) [IT](#)  
SUBJECT: SYRIA: ITALY SUPPORTS EU ACTION ON SEIF; WILL  
PRESS ON IRAQ FOREIGN FIGHTERS

REF: A. SECSTATE 119436  
[1](#)B. ROME 1842  
[1](#)C. SECSTATE 92339

Classified By: Acting Political Minister Counselor Jonathan Cohen for reasons 1.4 b and d.

[1](#)1. (C) Poloff delivered ref A points to the Prime Minister's Diplomatic Advisor on the Middle East, Marco Carnelos, and to the MFA's Acting Office Director for Near East Affairs, Michele Tommasi August 29. Tommasi said the GOI was well aware of the Seif case and supported the EU's plan to approach Damascus privately first, and then issue a public statement if the private diplomatic channel failed to yield results. Poloff suggested PM Prodi raise the issue with Syrian Vice President Shara during Shara's September 6 visit to Rome (Ref B) if the matter is not resolved beforehand. Tommasi confirmed that he would put strong language in the PM's talking points.

[1](#)2. (C) Poloff urged Tommasi to also use Shara's visit to press Syria to stop the flow of foreign fighters (Ref C) across the border into Iraq. Tommasi said he would include points on foreign fighters in the PM's briefing papers.  
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